

REMARKS

Claims 20-22, 24, 25, 28-39, 41, 43-44, 46 and 47 are pending and stand preliminarily rejected. Reconsideration of the claims as amended is respectfully requested.

Rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 112

Claims 35 and 43-44 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112. Applicant has amended the claims for clarity, and believes those issues have been addressed. Withdrawal of this rejection is respectfully requested.

Rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 103 in view of Freeman

Claims 47, 21-25, 29-33, 36, 37, 41-44 and 46 stand preliminarily rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over U.S. Patent No. 5,830,496 (“Freeman”) in view of Webster, U.S. Patent No. 5,782,787. Applicant respectfully traverses in view of the amended claims.

Applicant submits that the cited references do not teach or suggest the claimed invention. For example, the Examiner’s principle citation is to US 5,830,496 (Freeman). Freeman teaches a multi-layer dressing which, in general terms, includes a non-woven wound contact layer and also a layer of greater hydrophilicity (see column 3, lines 35 to 38 for reference to a non-woven material as the wound contact layer and see column 6, line 16 to 19 for reference to a non-woven material as a “superabsorbent” layer).

Freeman suggests that the layers of his dressing are joined together by techniques such as heat or ultrasonic sealing methods (see column 6, lines 36-37); however, Freeman does not teach or suggest that the layers be needled together as required by amended claim 47. The needling of non-woven layers (i) and (ii) causes the layers of the fibers to become “intertwined.” This has

particular advantages in that it allows free movement in the layers to provide for flexibility and stretching and also prevents delamination of the dressing caused by the fact that layers (i) and (ii) have differential water absorption characteristics which can result in different degrees of swelling. A combination with Webster or the other cited references (Patel or Sagar) still fails to teach or suggest the claimed invention. Applicant requests withdrawal of the rejection for claim 47 and all dependent claims.

Applicant submits that all claims are now in condition for allowance and action towards such is respectfully requested. If it would be helpful to this process, the Examiner is invited to contact Applicant's attorney at the telephone number listed below.

Respectfully submitted,

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